

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 7193

EXDIS

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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, ELAB, IT

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DC) SECRETARY
ON POLITICAL SITUATION

SUMMARY: IN MAY 14 MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY SECRETARY FANFANI EXPRESSED VIEWS ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES INCLUDING THE VISIT OF PRESIDENT FORD, THE JUNE 15 REGIONAL ELECTIONS, POST-ELECTION PROSPECTS FOR THE CENTER-LEFT GOVERNMENT FORMULA, AND THE LABOR SITUATION. END SUMMARY

1. JUNE 15 ELECTIONS -- I HAD A VERY FINE LUNCHEON WITH FANFANI MAY 14. I FOUND FANFANI AS ENERGETIC AND CORDIAL AS EVER, DESPITE A VERY HEAVY WORK SCHEDULE. FANFANI INDICATED SATISFACTION WITH THE RESULTS OF HIS EFFORTS TO MOBILIZE THE DC PARTY IN RECENT WEEKS. HE FEELS DC EXPLOITATION OF THE LAW AND ORDER ISSUE HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE AND HAS BACKED THE SOCIALISTS INTO A CORNER. HOWEVER, FANFANI TOLD ME HE CANNOT BE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE ELECTION RESULTS BECAUSE AN EXPECTED GOOD SHOWING OF HIS PARTY IN SMALLER COMMUNES IS LIKELY TO BE CANCELLED OUT BY LOSSES IN LARGER CITIES LIKE MILAN, TURIN, ROME AND, PERHAPS, NAPLES. AS A RESULT, FANFANI EXPECTS THE DC WILL LOSE 2 TO 3 PERCENT IN THE JUNE 15 VOTE.

2. PERFORMANCE OF OTHER PARTIES -- FANFANI TOLD ME HE EXPECTS THE SOCIALISTS TO GAIN THE MAJORITY OF DC VOTE LOSSES. HE PREDICTS THE LIBERALS WILL CONTINUE TO DECLINE IN STRENGTH.

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THE REPUBLICANS COULD GAIN SOME, ALTHOUGH PRI PATRIARCH LA

MALFA IS IN ILL HEALTH (FOLLOWING A CATARACT OPERATION) AND THIS MAY HAVE A NEGATIVE EFFECT. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS SHOULD HOLD FIRM.

3. POST-ELECTORAL SITUATION -- FANFANI SAID THAT THE POLITICAL SITUATION WILL BE DIFFICULT AFTER THE ELECTIONS. DEPENDING ON THE VOTE RESULT, THE SOCIALISTS WILL BE MORE OR LESS VIGOROUS IN PRESSING THEIR DEMANDS AND, IN ANY CASE, HARDER TO WORK WITH. THE DC LEFT WING, WHICH IS MAKING LITTLE OR NO TROUBLE AT THE MOMENT, WILL BEGIN TO CAUSE PROBLEMS AFTER THE ELECTION. FANFANI STATED THAT HE HAS NO MAJOR DIFFERENCES WITH MORO WITH REGARD TO THE CENTER-LEFT FORMULA (I.E., BOTH SUPPORT IT).

4. LABOR SITUATION -- FANFANI TOLD ME HE HOPES TO PREVENT ANY FURTHER DIVISIONS IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT UNTIL AFTER THE JUNE 15 ELECTIONS. AFTER THE ELECTIONS, FANFANI FORESEES THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW UNION COALESCING AROUND FORCES LEAVING THE CISL, THE VANNI FORCES IN THE UIL AND SOME OF THE AUTONOMOUS UNIONS. FANFANI DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT SCALIA WOULD HAVE THE SUPPORT NECESSARY TO HEAD THE NEW UNION AND MENTIONED FORMER LABOR MINISTER COPPO AS A POSSIBLE CANDIDATE.

5. PRESIDENT FORD'S JUNE 3 VISIT -- FANFANI EXPRESSED GREAT PLEASE AT THE PRESIDENT'S PLANNED VISIT AND SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL BE PARTICULARLY WELCOMED BY THE ITALIAN PUBLIC. FANFANI DOES NOT FORESEE THAT THE VISIT WILL HAVE ADDITIONAL POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS BEYOND THE CRITICISM COMMUNIST SECRETARY BERLINGUER HAS ALREADY EXPRESSED. I SPOKE TO FANFANI ABOUT THE RECENT REMARKS BY PRESIDENT FORD AND THE SECRETARY ON THE REALITIES OF OUR DETENTE POLICY AND THE FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE OF OUR NATO ALLIANCE. FANFANI TOLD ME HE HAS RECENTLY GRANTED AN INTERVIEW TO A FOREIGN MAGAZINE (NAME UNCERTAIN), IN WHICH HE TAKES THE POSITION THAT NO MATTER HOW STRONG A COUNTRY'S ALLIES ARE, EACH PARTNER IN AN ALLIANCE (LIKE NATO) MUST TAKE CARE OF MAINTAINING ITS OWN LIBERTIES AND DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM. NO ONE ELSE IS GOING TO DO THIS JOB FOR THEM. VOLPE

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